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ABSTRACT

The role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in American Indian education is discussed in this speech. At the present time, this role is limited to federally recognized Indians living on reservations or Indian trust land; for other Indian students, the BIA's role is that of an advocate, helping Indian people get what they want and need in regard to education. The involvement of Indians in the educational programs serving them is described as vital to the basic educational objective of the BIA. A central part of this objective is to carry out an effective program for students in Federal schools designed to prepare the students for successful living. Programs in bilingual education, early childhood education, and higher education are discussed. Information is also provided on testing, evaluation, and school construction and on the work being done to effect a greater coordination among the off-reservation boarding schools so that educational offerings to students can be strengthened and extended. (PS)

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"INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS"

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It is a privilege to have a chance to discuss Indian education in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at this Fourth National Indian Education Conference. The National Indian Education Association is to be commended for making this conference possible. Also, it is felt that the theme of this conference, "Unity Through Communication," is both timely and urgent.

It is timely because opportunities have never been greater for the approximately one million Indian Americans and the educational programs serving them. Resources are available which were not believed possible five years ago. New resources are on the horizon through Public Law 92-318 with its Title IV, the Indian Education Act. This continues to stress the need for "Unity Through Communication" throughout Indian education so that the most effective use can be made of all resources to the benefit of the students served.

At the present time, as most of you know, the primary role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Indian education is limited to Federally recognized Indians living on reservations or Indian trust land. The role of the Bureau for other Indian American students is that of an advocate, helping Indian people get what they want and need in regard to education.

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In 1971, there were more than 203,000 Indian students in school. Of this number more than 51,000 attended Bureau of Indian Affairs schools; approximately 134,000 attended public schools; and about 18,000 attended mission and other types of schools. This shows that the Federal installations served 25% of the Indian student population, the public school 66% and other types of schools 9%. The 200 schools operated by the Bureau ranged, geographically, from southern Florida to the Arctic circle.

The BIA budget for education programs exceeded $200 million in fiscal year 1972. This amount included funds for the operation and construction of Federal schools, for assistance to public schools serving Indian students, for higher education assistance and for adult education programs.

In terms of emphasis, a major thrust of the Bureau has been the involvement of the Indian people in educational programs affecting them. For the first time, there is an Indian Board of Education serving every Federal school. Through special training programs conducted for members of these boards and through the experience gained by serving on these boards, Indian parents have begun to exercise an effective, influential role in the direction of the schools attended by their children.

Additionally, thirteen schools have been turned over to tribes or communities for operation under contract with the Bureau. Also, three Indian community colleges have been initiated, operating under Indian control with substantial financial support from the Bureau.

In the public school sector, states and local public schools have been required to establish Indian parental committees which are involved in planning, developing and monitoring the programs for which JOM funds are used. Thus, the Indian parents can determine the needs of their children in public schools and develop programs that are responsive to those needs.

For the future, involvement of the Indian people in programs affecting them will continue to be emphasized. There will be no reversal from this direction. In fact, initial planning has been done which will make it possible, on a formal basis, for each community or tribe, to choose which services will be provided under contract. This could accelerate the contracting of services. Four states are now served by Indian organizations which administrater the Johnson-O'Malley contracts totally or partially for the state. The Higher Education program in five states is now administered totally or partially by Indian organizations. It is expected that this trend will continue and be accelerated.

The involvement of Indian Americans in the educational programs serving them is vital to the basic educational objective of the Bureau, which is to assure adequate educational opportunities for all Indian children of one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood within the continental United States and Alaska.

A central part of the basic objective is <u>to carry out an effective program for students in Federal schools designed to prepare the students for successful living</u>.

While much remains to be done, it's my belief that substantial inroads have been made in improving the quality and concern of the educational program serving Indian students.

I feel all will agree that we cannot be satisfied with what has been and is being done, but we should be encouraged by the substantial gains that have been achieved. Indians today have moved in force into the professional, university level of education. High school graduation is no longer the terminal goal. When you consider that 25 years ago, only about one-fourth of the children on the Navajo reservation were enrolled in any school program - then, it seems that some significant things have been happening in Indian education. But, as noted, much remains to be done.

Early childhood education programs are a vital part of this. Being developed is a comprehensive interdisciplinary education program, K-3, with kindergarten available to all reachable five year olds. Since 1968, 135 kindergarten units have been established serving approximately 2,600 five year olds. "A Kindergarten Curriculum Guide for Indian Children" has been developed, along with educational specifications and program requirements for facilities and equipment. Teaching materials, K-3, in the form of slides and pictures have also been developed.

It is proposed to establish pilot Tribal parent Child Development Centers to provide programs to help parents further the development of their children during the important growth time, pre-natal through age eight. Hopefully, these pilot centers can lead to the establishment of similar programs for all Indian American communities.

Bilingual education has been advanced through a formal agreement initiated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs with the Office of Education. Bureau schools have been able to participate in ESEA Title VII funding for developmental grants in bilingual education. Now, there are 19 bilingual Indian language projects funded under Title VII, including BIA and public schools, working in 14 different languages.

There is a new, exciting development in bilingual teacher training -- a model designed to train community people to become teachers by receiving most of their education on site, serving as interns in the classrooms. This will lead to a degree in elementary education. Career Opportunity Programs in the Bureau schools are also providing Indian aides the chance to obtain college degrees while continuing to earn a salary. Most of these programs permit aides to become certified teachers in four years -- a substantial development of their own potential and a valuable means for providing more Indian teachers in the Federal schools.

"Cultural follow-through" has been enhanced in the field of art by nine vans which are manned by professional artists which supplement art activities at a school with emphasis on art programs based on cultural heritage, using native materials.

Funds received under the Title programs have enabled the Bureau ot implement culturally-based programs, using local instructors, and the schools have gotten more involvement through Parent Councils that were set up in conjunction with Title I. In many instances, the Parent Council groups have determined the kind of programs they want. This has been the case in setting up special education classes.

During this fiscal year, Title I funds made available to Federal schools total over $13 million dollars. Through these funds, about 160 projects have been financed in Federal schools. Title II and Title III funding has been limited, but library, other media projects, and other commendable programs have been made possible at a few locations.

In regard to providing an effective program for students in Federal schools, urgent needs remain in the field of special education. A 1972 survey revealed that there were approximately 19,500 students attending Bureau schools who have a need for special education services. Of this number, only about 3,700 are receiving these services, leaving a balance of more than 15,000 with unmet special education needs. Additional funding has been requested to meet these needs.

Significant developments have occurred in developing standards and guidelines for food service, requesting funding to assure the provision of clothing to needy boarding school students, and to provide tutoring services in dormitory programs. Most important, the effort continues to enrich the home living aspect of dormitory programs.

During the past year, attention has been given to the research activity. A research council has been established. Resources priorities are being fixed. A research bulletin will be published, the first issue in January, 1973. Research will be encouraged along with student involvement in research as a problem-solving technique.

Evaluation of programs and activities is a main emphasis. In this regard, an important development has been the work of a Task Force on Testing of Indian students which strikes out at traditional means of ranking students based on standardized tests commonly recognized as culturally biased, developed on national norms. The main recommendation of the group was that such tests be phased out except for some diagnostic purposes. Instead, criterion-referenced tests, tied to curriculum content and educational and behavioral objectives of the student, become the tests of choice. Students were involved in the Task Force. In the near future, a testing policy statement will be issued for Bureau schools which sets forth this change and helps to protect the rights of students to equal education opportunity.

A test of Proficiency in English as a Second Language has been developed for use with Indian children. It is the only test of high quality that has been developed specifically for Indian children. It is as culturally fair as any and relates well to the criterion-referenced method described above. Most important, however, is that it provides a way to measure effectiveness, which is vital to any quality education program.

A concerted effort has been made this past year to collect all evaluation reports that describes education activities involving Indian children. Suffice it is to say at this point that a great deal of solid evaluating of effectiveness has occurred. Results of these activities are being made available in a special Research and Evaluation Report Series which will contribute to an annual evaluation report on BIA Education.

Another movement has been directed at getting greater coordination between the off-reservation boarding schools so that educational offerings to students can be strengthened and extended.

In terms of carrying out an effective program, important gains have been made, as indicated, in the field of higher education. Mr. Leroy Falling of the Higher Education staff will describe this. Similarly, Mr. Billy Mills will discuss important developments in the area of health education and out-of-school activities. Dr. Dave Warren will describe cultural studies and related research activities.

(PROVIDE TIME FOR 3 REPORTS)

As the Federal and contract schools approach the task of providing an effective program, you should know that it is my feeling that the programs should be exemplary and serve as a model for bicultural, bilingual education everywhere.

Another part of the basic objective is:

to obtain school facilities for eligible Indian children:

During the period 1969 to 1973, about $90,000,000 for construction has been provided by the Congress to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This has made it possible to replace outmoded, unsafe, overcrowded, antiquated facilities with modern facilities more conducive to learning. These facilities are now being planned with the help of the community involved. However, to bring remaining Federal facilities up to an acceptable standard, about one-half billion dollars would be required.

The construction problem is equally urgent in the public schools serving Indian students. For the past several years, funds available under Public Law 815 for this purpose have been almost non-existent and at least $100,000,000 is needed just to keep pace with added Indian enrollment in public schools. In the 1973 appropriation, there is $200,000 for a study of public school construction needs which, it is hoped, will be successful in pointing up the problem and finding solutions.

Also included in the basic objective of assuring adequate educational opportunities for all Indian students is:

to secure for all Indian children the educational opportunities available for all citizens through public education, and

to develop on the part of Indian groups, state and local officials recognition and acceptance of their full responsibilities for the education of Indians.

As in the past, there must be mutual readiness between the tribal group and the public school involved before the operation of a Federal school is made a part of the local public school system. In the past two years, few transfers have been made. It is believed that both state officials and the Indian people recognize a state responsibility for Indian education. Through the passage of Public Law 318 new resources will be available to public schools, but the concurrence of the Indian people served will be necessary before the funds are forthcoming.

In the Johnson-O'Malley program, during the past few years, the amount of funds going to basic support has been drastically reduced. In 1969 basic support funds accounted for over half of the total JOM expenditures.

In 1973, it is just over one-fourth. This represents quite a change. The hope is that with P.L. 318, all Johnson-O'Malley funds can be used for special programs for Indian students. Also, as I noted at the beginning, Indian parent councils must be consulted in all Johnson-O'Malley expenditures. Hopefully, programs which utilize teacher aids, education coordinators and help pay parental costs for needy students can be extended.

Another part of the objective is:

> to retain the valuable elements of Indian life and to strengthen the pride of Indian groups and the recognition by non-Indians as to the contribution of the Indian heritage to national life.

As it has been already noted, this has and will continue to receive emphasis in Federal schools. Local materials which have been developed, such as the Navajo Social Studies, have had an important effect.

The remaining parts of the objectives of assuring adequate educational opportunities are:

> to secure regular attendance of all Indian students until they graduate.
>
> and to appraise periodically the need for boarding schools.

The new dimension, I believe, in regard to these objectives is that the Indian people are now a vital part of the process of determining how to improve attendance and in evaluating the need for boarding schools. For the past several years, efforts have been directed toward getting schools constructed close to the homes of the students. It is my belief that it

will be necessary to operate boarding schools until the socio-economic conditions which cause the need for boarding schools are eliminated. The school alone cannot educate the child. The school must have the full cooperation and support of the parents, and economic conditions must be improved on reservations before any great changes are made. This is why road development and programs which provide employment opportunities are of such tremendous importance. All in the field of Indian education should, in my opinion, commit themselves to cooperating in every way possible to the improvement of these conditions. They have a direct effort on the education program.

To accomplish the objectives which have been set forth, two important developments have occurred or are underway.

First, to get a firm foundation on which to base planning, evaluation and management activities, a greatly improved management information system is being developed. This system will, in my opinion, result in better management and use of resources at every level in the Bureau's education system.

Next, to get services close to the students involved, an Indian Education Resources Center has been established. Dr. Buck Benham is the administrator of this center and will provide a report on its activities. (BENHAM REPORT)

You should know that the success of the total Bureau education endeavor will depend to a great extent on the funding provided. It is my belief that with "Unity Through Communication" Indian educational financial needs will be made known.

You have our thanks for the opportunity to participate in this important conference. Our role has been to explain Indian education in the BIA.

ATTACHMENT # 1

1. CONTRACT SCHOOLS:

Rough Rock
Rock Point
Borrego Pass
Busby
Wind River
Miccosukee
Ramah
Blackwater
Stefan
St. Michaels
Mandaree
Twin Buttes
St. Francis

TOTAL 13 + 2 planning - Holy Family (Bayfield) Wisc.
Lac Caute Ore Ille (Newport, Wisc.)

Lakota College Center (Pine Ridge)
Sentegleska College Center (Rosebud)

2. HIGHER EDUCATION IN FIVE STATES:

New Mexico - Navajo, AIPC, Mescalero
Arizona - Navajo
Utah - Navajo
Nebraska - Omaha
Alaska - Tlingit, Haida Council and Alaskan Native Brotherhood

3. JOHNSON-O'MALLEY:

North Dakota
South Dakota
Nebraska
New Mexico (Partial)

July, 1972